

United Nations

Press Release

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ United States President asks to repeal "zionism is racism" resolution, as general debate of forty-sixth session begins; Presidents of Brazil and El Salvador address Assembly; statements also made this morning by Prime Minister of New Zealand; and Foreign Ministers of Iceland and Burkina Faso.
- ◆ President of Security Council says Iraq has not met requirements on "full, final and complete disclosure" of weapons sites set out by Council.
- ◆ Secretary-General remains hopeful following consultations with President of El Salvador and General Command of the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN).
- ◆ Inspection team of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reports new findings on Iraqi nuclear programme.
- ◆ IAEA Conference adopts resolutions on application of Agency safeguards in Middle East and South Africa.

The forty-sixth session of the General Assembly began today its main debate. During the next three weeks, representatives of 166 countries -- many Heads of State and Foreign Ministers -- will address the Assembly and give their countries' viewpoints on the issues before the Assembly.

The opening statement of the Assembly's debate by tradition was made by Brazil. In his statement, the President of Brazil, Fernando Collor de Melo, addressed the need for the United Nations to face ethical challenges including environment and development, human rights, world population questions and the situation of women and children, alongside political and economical challenges.

Referring to next year's United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, President Collor said that political tasks of peace-building did not take place in a vacuum; it depended on economic development, which in turn was dependent on environmentally

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sustainable economic models. He said Brazil intended to explore opportunities for dialogue to the fullest and hoped to find its partners to be open and determined. "The Conference should not set the stage for grievances and recrimination; it should, on the contrary, provide the framework for mature and feasible proposals".

The President of El Salvador, Alfredo Felix Cristiani-Burkard, stated that his Government was currently engaged at United Nations system headquarters in a process of negotiation. It was clear, he said, that "time has come for war to come to an end in El Salvador". His Government was working tirelessly towards that goal. The main roadblocks had been resolved and only detail remained. Total agreement for an end to the conflict might soon be a reality.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland, Jon Baldvin Hannibalsson, said his Government was distressed that attempts had been made to introduce proposals on the management of whales into the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The problem was compounded when States considered introducing trade restrictions in response to differences in environmental policies. As a country overwhelmingly dependent on one natural resource and export commodity, Iceland could well understand the situation faced by many developing countries. The problems caused by protectionism were not confined, he said, to relations between industrialized countries and developing countries.

In his address, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, Issa Dominique Konate, said that in Africa, 500 million people had been condemned to stagnation and impoverishment. The external debt of the continent was an extremely heavy burden and the industrial countries had not come forth with contributions as promised. He supported an international conference on the financing of development, and welcomed Japan's decision to organize in 1993 a conference on development in Africa with the participation of African Heads of States.

The Prime Minister of New Zealand, James Bolger, said his country, as one of the first nations to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), firmly believed that attempts to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons must be an agenda item of the highest priority for the Organization. New Zealand welcomed the recent decisions of France and China to join the NPT, and urged all parties to agree to an indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995.

In his address, the President of the United States, George Bush, called for the repeal of the 1975 Assembly resolution, which identifies zionism as "a form of racism and racial discrimination". He told the Assembly that to equate zionism with racism was to "twist history" and to reject Israel itself. "This body cannot claim to stand for peace and, at the same time, challenge Israel's right to exist", he declared.

Speaking of the situation in the Gulf region, the President of the United States stated that the United Nations sanctions should be maintained as long as Saddam Hussein remains in power in Iraq, and that the Iraqi Government

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should proceed to the destruction of all its weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. And we cannot compromise, he said.

The Security Council met in consultations this morning to continue its discussion of Iraq's refusal to let United Nations inspection teams overfly Iraqi weapon sites with its own helicopters. Council members also consulted on the situation in Yugoslavia and Cambodia.

By its resolution 707 (1991) of 15 August, the Council had demanded that Iraq allow full, final and complete disclosure of all military sites. However, United Nations inspection teams have continuously reported difficulty entering into Iraqi weapons sites and that they were denied use of helicopters. The Council President, Jean-Bernard Merimée of France, requested that Iraq submit a formal written commitment that it would implement "unreservedly" the provisions of the resolution.

In a statement following Council consultations today, the Council President said he had received an answer yesterday from the Iraqi Government, which did "not meet the requirements set out by the Council". As far as the substance was concerned, Mr. Merimée said, "the Iraqi Government sticks to the conditions linked to its acceptance of the Security Council resolutions". He said that in their answer they never referred to resolution 707 but "just mentioned resolution 687 (1990)". Bilateral consultations would begin immediately to determine what further steps the Council might take, the President said.

In a related development, Ambassador Rolf Ekeus, Chairman of the Special Commission on the Disarmament of Iraq, informed the Council today that a group of United Nations inspectors had discovered a substantial amount of documentation in a building in Baghdad which pointed to the presence of a nuclear weapons development programme. According to Mr. Ekeus, the inspectors remained in the building and had not been allowed to leave with the documents. He described today's findings as significant since the documentation would provide more details and a better understanding of the breadth of the Iraqi nuclear programme.

Council President Jean-Bernard Merimée was requested by Council members to contact the Iraqi Foreign Minister immediately and to demand that the inspectors be allowed to leave the site with the documents.

A United Nations spokesman announced today that Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar's consultations with the President of El Salvador and the General Command of the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) had continued throughout the weekend.

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The spokesman said that while progress was being made and the gap appeared to be closing on the question of guarantees for the reintegration of the FMLN into society, "roadblocks still remain". Continued flexibility would be required to overcome them, he said.

The Secretary-General remained hopeful that "important steps would be taken to break the deadlock in the negotiations".

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Participants in the thirty-fifth regular session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have called for the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East. They also strongly condemned Iraq's non-compliance with its nuclear non-proliferation obligations, including its safeguards agreements with the Agency.

These were among a number of decisions taken by participants from more than 90 countries at the five-day Conference, which ended on Friday. Other resolutions included a call once again on Israel to submit its nuclear installations to IAEA safeguards. Also, the IAEA Director-General, Hans Blix, was asked to verify the completeness of the required inventory of South Africa's nuclear installations and material, as submitted by that Government in its safeguards agreement with the Agency.

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